

# **SAINT ELIZABETH HAVEN FOR ELDER JUSTICE**

## **QUICK REFERENCE MANUAL FOR DIRECT SERVICE PROVIDERS**

### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR VICTIMS OF ELDER ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION**



A program of the Saint Elizabeth Community

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## IS ELDER ABUSE A CRIME?

Abuse of an older adult or vulnerable person is a crime under RI Adult Protective Services law **RI General Law 46-66**.

\*An **older adult** is a person 60 years or older.

\*A **vulnerable person** is 18 years or older, suffers from physical or mental incapacitation that restricts the ability to perform normal daily living activities.

The law mandates that anyone who suspects the abuse of an older person must report it to the Adult Protective Services Unit (401-462-0555) and abuse of a vulnerable person must be reported to the Dept. of Behavioral Health, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (401) 462-2629.

**WHAT IS ELDER ABUSE?** Elder Abuse is any form of intentional or neglectful act by a caregiver or trusted individual that leads to harm or loss to an older person. Only one case in 14 is reported to authorities.

### TYPES

### SOME SIGNS

**PHYSICAL ABUSE** is physical force that results in bodily injury, pain, or impairment. It includes assault, battery, and inappropriate restraints, reported drug overdose or confinement.

Unexplained fractures, bruises, cuts; broken glasses; failure to give medication; signs of restraints; refusal of caregiver to allow you to see the elder alone

**SEXUAL ABUSE** is non-consensual sexual contact of any kind with an older person.

Bruises around breast/genitals; unexplained venereal disease or genital infections; unexplained vaginal/anal bleeding; torn, stained, bloody underwear

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE** is an escalating pattern of violence by an intimate partner where the violence is used to exercise power and control.

Name calling, disrespect, blaming, stalking, isolation, economic control

**PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE** is the willful infliction of mental or emotional anguish by threat, humiliation, or isolation.

Threatening, belittling, or controlling caregiver that you witness; elder behavior such as rocking, sucking, or mumbling to oneself; verbal or nonverbal conduct

**VERBAL ABUSE** is the willful infliction of unjustifiable mental suffering through word and body language.

Insults, humiliation, threats as attempts to scare, isolation, control

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**FINANCIAL ABUSE** is the illegal or improper use of an older person's funds, property, or resources.

Misuse of elder's checks, credit cards, or accounts; stolen cash, income checks, or household goods; forged elder's signature; identity theft; improper use of power of attorney

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**INTENTIONAL NEGLECT** is the failure of a caregiver to fulfill his or her care giving responsibilities.

Dehydration, malnutrition; untreated medical problems like bed sores; unsanitary living conditions like dirt, bugs, soiled bedding and clothes; abandonment

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### IMPORTANT TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

**Capacity to Consent:** mental ability to make rational decisions that include the ability to perceive, appreciate all relevant facts and to reach a rational judgement upon such facts. A decision to refuse services cannot be the sole evidence for finding the person lacks capacity.

**Caretaker:** an individual who helps a person with acts of daily living. It could be a professional, family member, friend.

**Vulnerable Person:** a person 18 years or older who suffers from a condition of physical or mental incapacitation because of a developmental disability, organic brain damage or mental illness; or has one or more physical or mental limitations that restrict the ability of the person to perform the normal activities of daily living.

**Orders of Protection (Restraining Orders):** court ordered protection prevents a person or persons from physical, mental, verbal, or other abuse. Victim must go to local courthouse, fill out paperwork, including sworn affidavit, and wait for the judge to review and approve the order. Domestic Violence Court Advocates in the courthouses in Providence, Wakefield, Newport and Warwick will assist victims through the process. Advocate information is located below.

**Power of Attorney (POA):** a legal document used by an older adult to give another person the authority to act for the older adult. The older adult must have decision-making capacity to sign a power of attorney (POA). The older adult can revoke the POA or it expires upon the older adult's death. A durable POA remains in effect if the older adult loses decision-making capacity. Contact RI Legal Services for more information. See contact information located below.

It is difficult to check the validity of a POA document without further investigation. The POA should have 2 witness signatures and is notarized. If the POA comes from a legal office, contact the lawyer for confirmation. A financial institution may also check the signature against financial records.

**Guardianship:** probate court may appoint someone to make personal and/or financial decisions for an older adult if the judge decides the person lacks capacity to make decisions. The Guardian has a legal duty to make decisions for the older adult consistent with the decisions made by the older adult before becoming incapacitated. Contact the Office of Healthy Aging for more information about Guardianships or RI Legal Services. Find contact information below.

**Office of Healthy Aging**

**401-462-0555**

**RI Legal Services**

**401-274-2652**

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**WHEN YOU RESPOND TO A CALL INVOLVING AN OLDER ADULT, REMEMBER: (1) FEAR MAY PREVENT AN ELDER FROM TELLING WHAT IS REALLY HAPPENING, AND (2) THE CAREGIVER OR FAMILY MEMBER MAY BE THE PERPETRATOR.**

Focus on victim safety first! Be aware of and avoid assumptions about the situation and the elder. Recognize abuser tactics and stay focused on the elder's safety. Work collaboratively with Adult Protective Services, elder justice and domestic violence advocates, sexual assault advocates, health care and victim service providers.

### **COMMUNITY RESOURCES for ELDER ASSISTANCE**

#### **FIRST RESPONDERS**

**911**

*Emergency response system linked to police, fire and EMTs*

**Hospital Emergency Rooms                      911**

*Assess elders for injuries, illnesses and abuse*

#### **REPORT ABUSE**

**Adult Protective Services (APS)                      401-462-0555**

**Office of Healthy Aging (OHA)                      24hr/7days/week**

*Investigates elder abuse and self-neglect complaints, refers to police, office of attorney general, hospitals and victim service agencies*

**RI Dept. of Behavioral Healthcare,                      401-462-2629**

**Developmental Disabilities  
and Hospitals (BHDDH)**

*Investigates complaints of abuse and neglect of disabled persons, refers to police, office of attorney general, hospitals; works with APS when person is age 60 and over*

#### **SHELTERS**

**Haven Shelter**

**401-244-5476**

**Saint Elizabeth Haven for  
Elder Justice**

M-F, 8am – 4pm

*Temporary shelter for elder victims, case management and safety planning support, case coordination for elder victims in shelter or living in the community*

**Crossroads RI                      24hr/7days/week**

**[www.crossroadsri.org](http://www.crossroadsri.org)**

*Homeless shelter, domestic violence program*

**Domestic Violence Shelters**

*Victim services including emergency shelter, support groups, counseling services and help with legal system*

24hr/7days/week

Blackstone Valley Advocacy Center                      401-723-3057

Elizabeth Buffum Chace Center                      401-738-1700

Domestic Violence Resource Center                      401-782-3990

Sojourner House                      401-765-3232

Women's Resource Center of SC                      401-846-5263

**Operation Stand Down** **401-383-4730**  
*Support for homeless and at risk veterans in need of housing, case management and support services*

## **MENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTION**

**BH Link** **401- 414-5465** 24hr/7 Crisis Support  
*Immediate mental health intervention and assistance in a crisis*

## **IMMIGRANT/TRANSLATION SERVICES**

**Center for Southeast Asians** **401-274-8811**  
*Victim services, interpreters, advocacy and support services*

**Progreso Latino** **401-728-5920**  
*Bilingual services for elders and disabled over age 60*

**Dorcas International Institute** **401-784-8600**  
*Bilingual services, interpreter, immigration services*

## **PROSECUTION**

**RI Office of the Attorney General** **401-274-4400**  
**Elder Abuse Unit**  
*Investigates and prosecutes crimes against persons age 60 and older*

**Long Term Care Ombudsman** **401-785-3340**  
**Toll Free 1-888-351-0808**

*Investigates abuse complaints by elders and the disabled in the long-term care system; advocates to solve problems*

## **INFORMATION AND REFERRAL**

**Aging and Disability Resource Centers (The Point)** **401-462-4444**  
24hr/7days/week  
*Information and referral services for elders and disabled, age 60 and older*

**United Way** 24hr/7days/week **211**  
*Information and referral services*

**Crime Victim (Elder Abuse Resource) Helpline**  
24/7 **1-800-494-8100**  
*Information and referral services for older victims*

## **CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES**

**RI Legal Services** **401-274-2652**  
**Elder Protection Project** M – F, 8:30am – 6 pm  
*Legal assistance to protect elders from abuse; outreach to underserved-populations (at no cost)*

## **VICTIM SERVICE PROVIDERS**

**RI Dept. of Behavioral Healthcare, Development Disabilities and Hospitals (BHDDH)** **401-462-2629**  
24hr/7days/week  
*Support services and advocacy for disabled victims of abuse*

**Tri-County CAP** **401-441-6325**  
**Deaf Victim Advocates**  
*Support and advocacy services for D/deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf/blind victims of crime*

**Pride in Aging RI** [info@prideinagingri.org](mailto:info@prideinagingri.org)  
*Service, advocacy and education for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Elders*

**Elder Protective Service Case Management Agencies**  
*Case Management services for elders, age 60 and older, who are victims of abuse or self-neglect*

Child and Family Service	Newport	401-849-2300
Child and Family Service	Providence	401-781-3669
East Bay Community Action	Newport	401-847-7821
East Providence		401-437-1000
Tri County Community Action		401-519-1940
		401-351-2750
Westbay Community Action		401-732-4660

**RI Office of the Attorney General** **401-274-4400**  
**Victim Service Unit**

*Supports victims of felony crime, guidance through the stages of criminal justice process, referrals to victim service providers, accompany victims to court*

**Family Service of RI** 401-519-2280  
*Advocates for and assists victims of crime*

**RI Coalition against Domestic Violence** 401-467-9940  
24/7 1-800-494-8100  
*Information, support, advocacy for victims of domestic violence/sexual assault*

**Domestic Violence Court Advocates:**  
*Victim support, victim rights information, referral, help with protective orders, monitor treatment by the court, coordinate services for sexual assault victims*  
M – F, 8:30am – 4:00 pm

Kent County 401-822-6680  
Providence County 401-458-3372  
Washington County 401-782-4173/401-782-4174  
Newport County 401-236-8364

**Cybercrime Support Network** 211  
*Report and receive support services for cybercrime and online fraud*

**Crime Victim Compensation Program** 401-462-7655  
*Provides up to \$25,000 in reimbursement for expenses related to violent crimes*

**Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF)** 1-800-742-4453  
24hr/7days/7week  
*Refers to the Child Protective Services unit to investigate any reports on abuse or neglect on children and youth*

**Saint Elizabeth Haven for Elder Justice Community Program** 401-244-5476  
*Advocacy, case management, safety planning for victims in the community*

**Day One: Sexual Assault & Trauma Resource Center** 401-421-4100  
24h/7 1-800-494-8100  
*Support, information and advocacy for victims of sexual assault*



**RI Office of Mental Health Advocate** 401-462-2003  
*Advocacy, legal representation for individuals with mental health illness*

## NATIONAL ELDER ABUSE RESOURCES

**Contact the organizations below for information about elder abuse, research results, best practices and training materials:**

**National Clearinghouse to End Abuse in Later Life (NCALL)**  
[www.ncall.us](http://www.ncall.us)

**National Center on Elder Abuse**  
[www.ncea.acl.gov](http://www.ncea.acl.gov)

**National Institute on Aging**  
[www.nia.nih.gov](http://www.nia.nih.gov)

**Add additional resources as you encounter them:**

# NOTES

For further information, or assistance, please contact:  
The Saint Elizabeth Haven for Elder Justice  
401 244 5473

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